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8 April 1966

US STRATEGY FOR EMPLOYING LAND FORCES IN NONNUCLEAR REGIONAL WAR

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US Strategy for Employing Land Forces
in Nonnuclear Regional War

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8 April 1966

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SUMMARY

The current circumstances of nuclear plenty, for both the Soviets and the United States, and the approaching strategic parity tends to create stability at the strategic level and to bear importantly on both the likelihood of limited or regional wars in the future and the levels at which they may be fought.

Examined herein is the current United States strategy for the employment of land forces in nonnuclear regional wars and how this strategy would be implemented in various regions of the world. Additionally, tenets of military strategy which are oriented toward the 1970-80 time frame and which may improve our capability to react promptly to meet our worldwide commitments have been identified.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overall analysis of the current US military strategy for the employment of land forces in nonnuclear war in various regions. From this analysis, the tenets of military strategy which are considered to be applicable to the employment of land forces in all regional environments and which are oriented toward the 1970-80 time frame will be identified.

Despite the talk of and concern for total conflict or general war, most wars have proceeded under some definite constraints. They have been controlled as to areas, as to the number of participants, and as to the weapons employed. Although there are numerous terms and definitions which may be applicable for this type of armed hostility, for this paper a regional war is defined as:

A military encounter involving the forces of two or more nations in which the objectives have been limited by definitive policy as to the extent of destructive power that can be employed and to the extent of geographical area that might be involved. Specifically included in the latter limitation is that the homelands of the United States, as well as those of Communist China and the Soviet Union, are to be recognized as sanctuaries.

Subsequent to World War II, when nuclear weapons were new and scarce, there was general agreement on one thing - that it would be foolish for a nation without nuclear weapons to engage itself in a war with a nation which had such weapons, and could deliver them

over great distances. Therefore, as long as the United States had a virtual monopoly in nuclear weapons and long range delivery means, the strategy of massive retaliation was a credible threat to propound against any possible Communist threat. However, in the 1950-1960 time frame, the problem began to change. The United States saw its monopoly in nuclear weapons ended as the Soviet Union, England and France developed them.

Under the current circumstances of nuclear plenty, for both the Soviets and the United States, and the approaching strategic parity, the premeditated instigation of general war by either side would seem to be an act that could only be resorted to under circumstances in which the threat to their security or ours was clearly unacceptable.¹ To this end, a former Secretary of State stated before a senatorial committee that he could not conceive of the President involving us in an all-out nuclear war unless we were clearly in danger of all-out nuclear devastation ourselves or unless actual moves had been made to devastate us.²

This balance tends to create stability at the strategic level and to bear importantly on both the likelihood of limited or regional wars in the future and on the levels at which they may be fought. That regional wars will occur under the strategic deterrent is already evident. On a number of occasions since World War II, the

¹Harvey A. DeWeerd, Concepts of Limited War: an Historical Approach, p. 15.

²US Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Hearings on the Nomination of Christian A. Herter to be Secretary of State, pp. 9-10.

United States and the Sino-Soviet Bloc have clashed directly or by proxy and have employed force or the threat of force. In Greece, in Korea, in Lebanon, in Berlin, and in Vietnam, force or the threat of force has been used in regional areas. Each of these regional wars - or potential regional wars - saw the United States and the Soviet Union or China on opposing sides and the homelands of each a sanctuary.³ Additionally, where force was employed, it has been at the nonnuclear level. That the United States could participate in other regional wars at the nonnuclear level has been attested to by the Secretary of Defense. When he was summarizing the general purpose forces situation after two years in office, Mr. McNamara stated: ". . . The presently programmed forces, in general, could by nonnuclear means alone counter a wide spectrum of Sino-Soviet bloc aggression in regions other than Europe."⁴ Two years later he stated:

. . . Our most recent studies support the general conclusions reached last year, namely that: (1) The forces envisioned in NATO plans for the end of 1966, fully manned, trained, equipped, and properly positioned could hold on the Central Front using nonnuclear means alone. . . .⁵

³Morton H. Halpern, Limited War in the Nuclear Age, p. 2.

⁴US Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations, Department of Defense Appropriations for 1964, pp. 330-331.

⁵US Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, Military Posture and HR9637, pp. 6918-6919.

CHAPTER 2

GLOBAL POLICY AND STRATEGY

The strategy for utilizing military forces is concerned with deterring wars of all kinds and with successfully fighting wars not deterred.¹ However, before this strategy can be developed, the military man must accept two premises. The first is that war is a means of fulfilling the dictates of a political will to attain national objectives. The second is that the methods of employing the armed power of the United States must be consistent with the philosophy of our national life.²

Historically, national policy has dictated that US strategy must be based upon reaction to, rather than initiation of, aggressive action. In his defense budget address of 1961, President Kennedy affirmed this policy by stating: "Our arms will never be used to strike the first blow in any attack."³

Current national policy is directed toward the containment of communism. While the primary effort is aimed at halting any Communist incursion directed toward more aggressive goals, it remains a reaction policy and is greatly influenced by the formal agreements and statements that explicitly or implicitly define conditions

¹David M. Abshine and Richard V. Allen, ed., National Security, p. xxiii.

²John D. Hayes, "Peripheral Strategy . . . Littoral Tactics . . . Limited War," in American Military Policy, pp. 407-413.

³The President of the United States, Recommendations Relating to our Defense Budget, pp. 1-2.

under which US military forces might become involved in armed conflict abroad.⁴

The main support of the entire political strategy of containment has been our military strategy. Since 1961, this has been a strategy of flexible response or multiple options. This strategy provides that there be several levels in the possible application of military power: beginning with the limited employment of forces and weapons in counterinsurgency operations; extending to operations for conventional regional war; and followed, possibly, by escalation through the selective or limited use of battlefield nuclear weapons. Beyond this, it would be possible to extend nuclear attacks to deeper targets, or to an all out attack comprising a massive nuclear exchange which would be catastrophic to both sides.⁵

The general strategy for conducting regional wars is that the US maintain a credible capability to react promptly, with adequate forces, to augment allied forces at virtually any place in the world. In his testimony for congressional hearings, the Secretary of Defense described in detail the strategy for those forces which would be used in regional wars:

With regard to our general purpose forces, we should bear in mind that the United States carries only a part of the burden in the collective defense of the free world. Indeed, in the NATO area and the Far East, the forces of our allies clearly outnumber our own, and that is as it should be. Nevertheless, our general purpose forces represent the

⁴Elizabeth C. Roy, US Military Commitments, p. 1.

⁵Earle G. Wheeler, "Military Strength and National Security: How Can Military Strength Best Promote Peace?" General Electric Forum, Vol. VIII, Jul.-Sep. 1965, pp. 16-19.

essential margin-particularly in modern weapons-needed to counter the weight of the tactical forces of the Communist bloc.

This role of our general purpose forces in the collective defense has a most important bearing on the kinds of forces we require.

First, they must either be stationed in potential trouble areas or must be highly mobile and readily deployable, if they are to serve as a central reserve in the United States.

Second, if we retain a central reserve of forces in the United States, we must have adequate airlift and sealift to move them promptly to wherever they may be needed.

Third, since there is a practical limit on the volume of material that we can ship in any short period of time, we must consider the possibilities of prepositioning stocks for our mobile forces in various parts of the world.

Fourth, since we cannot be sure where in the world our forces may have to fight, we must build into them a great deal of versatility.

Fifth, since our general purpose forces to a large extent are designed to complement the forces of our allies, their size and character will be affected by the size and character of the forces of our allies.⁶

This general strategy clearly supports the principle of prompt reaction. It also establishes the role of and the broad basis for the force requirements to meet our worldwide requirements as they apply to regional wars. The difficulty will be in the implementation of this strategy and in the selection of options or combinations of options to meet the enemy threat.

⁶US Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations, Department of Defense Appropriations for 1963, p. 48.

Without any constraints, the best way to deter an aggressor and to improve the reaction time of our forces would be to confront him in the areas of interest with forces in being and deployed. However, the systems of alliances and agreements to which this nation is bound, involve worldwide commitments. Viewed from a political, military, or economic standpoint the impossibility of providing US land forces in all places is evident.⁷ In many areas on the periphery of the Communist countries, the local or international political constraints could prevent the stationing of US land forces prior to a period of crisis. Additionally, with the current forces available, there would be a considerable loss of flexibility and a corresponding reluctance to commit resources in one area that may be required in other areas of potential conflict.⁸ This loss of flexibility can be attributed, primarily, to the difficulty of withdrawing the committed forces to meet a threat in another area. For example, it would be extremely difficult to withdraw our land forces from Europe for use in Vietnam or Korea, if required. Alternatively, the economic constraints associated with the provision of US land forces in all potential trouble areas would be difficult to overcome. The magnitude of the force that would be required to be committed in the numerous and dispersed areas of possible employment would involve enormous expense.

⁷Morton H. Halpern, Limited War in the Nuclear Age, p. 123.

⁸Ibid., pp. 6-8.

With constraints imposed, the best way to deter an aggressor and to improve the reaction time of our forces would be to station limited forces in selected areas, combined with a centrally located, readily deployable reserve force which has adequate sea and airlift. Although this requires that the initial defense in most areas would be conducted by indigenous forces, it is advantageous to the United States in that it requires less force in being and provides for flexibility and for the selection of forces to be used. Forces centrally located can be employed rapidly to meet a sudden threat without jeopardizing the defense in the selected critical areas - e.g., the deployment of land forces from the United States to Santo Domingo. Additionally, the type and size of the force could be tailored to meet a particular threat and not one that is merely postulated. However, interwoven with this rapid deployment capability for the central reserve, are the problems of strategic warning of an impending attack and political constraints.

When there is a relatively long period of warning, the problem of ensuring a capability for rapid deployment may not be critical. Alternatively, with little warning, any delay in taking action appropriate to the warning time could be critical. Then, the probable loss of indigenous personnel and territory could result in a loss of political stability, particularly in those countries with weak political postures. Even with the eventual recovery of lost territory, the restoration of faith in the government would be a slow and difficult process.

Equally critical for the effective use of the rapid deployment capability is the use of enroute bases and overfly rights. These are dependent upon the political reliability of the nation through and over which access will have to be acquired. The use of bases or overfly rights should present no problem in a country which may be faced with a threat, e.g. Thailand today, or if the country shares the same views as the United States, e.g. the Philippines. However, if the threat is subject to interpretation with no outright attack involved, or if a country does not support the United States' position, permission to use bases or overfly rights could be denied.

An alternative option combines the stationing of limited forces in selected areas and the employment of a central reserve with the prepositioning of equipment and supplies in threatened areas. Although preposition of equipment will not substitute for the deployment of troops, it will reduce reaction time by reducing surge lift requirements and will insure timely support for a specific force during the initial phases of an operation pending the time when supply action from other sources would be effective. However, the possibility that prepositioned equipment and supplies may be mal-positioned warrants careful consideration. Additionally, prepositioning on land requires not only long-term rights in the host country, but also political acquiescences, at the time of need, for US access to the equipment and to the air or sea base serving it. It also requires the agreement of countries overflown along the route to the preposition site.

To be effective, a strategy requires more than the mere formulation of objectives; it requires a balance between objectives and means, that the objectives are within range of the means and the means are commensurate with the objectives.⁹ Regardless of the options selected, the land forces, to support this strategy, must be prepared and equipped to perform its role with equal effectiveness in a variety of regional environments and situations.

The land, unlike the relatively homogeneous sea and air is a surface of infinite variety; its already complex nature is further complicated by vegetation and climate extremes. The problems of land combat, therefore, are not susceptible to any simple solution.

The land battle which is a continuing process with varying degrees of intensity never ceases until the armed forces of the enemy concede defeat. Although the land battle consists of an interwoven complex of many activities, it is basically a combination of fire and maneuver or maneuver supported by firepower. A combination of these two elements constitutes a spectrum of action that comprise the land battle in its more primitive form.

A third element, derived not only from the primary ones of fire and maneuver but from the continuing nature of the land battle as well, is the imperative necessity for logistic support. Land forces can not fall back to their logistic installations without jeopardizing the successful conduct of the land battle.

⁹Robert E. Osgood, Limited War, p. 241.

These considerations lead to the requirement to provide the land battle commander with as many alternatives as is possible in order to permit him to accomplish his mission. Alternatives mean a choice of combinations of fire support and maneuver to meet various enemy threats over any type of terrain, under any conditions of climate and weather.

CONCLUSIONS

The land forces role, in this reaction strategy, is to augment the forces of our allies promptly with sufficient force to deter or defeat an aggressor. The degree of success in each regional area will depend on:¹⁰

1. Our willingness to counter Communist pressure in a timely manner.
2. Our capability to assist allied forces to maintain cohesiveness and to deny substantial territorial gains to the aggressor.
3. Our capability to assist our allies to expedite the defeat and expulsion of the aggressor and thereby to provide a basis for ending the conflict on terms acceptable to us.

¹⁰William W. Kaufman, Military Policy and National Security, pp. 114-115.

CHAPTER 3

WESTERN EUROPE

US POLICY AND STRATEGY

Except for the United States, the European region is the area of greatest strategic significance to the Free World. An essential part of the perimeter which contains the Communist world is formed by the European area of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The critical geographical area within this region is the industrial heartland - Western Germany, France and the Benelux Countries. It, with the United Kingdom, contains sufficient people, skills, industry and other resources to swing the world balance of power. Any decisive Soviet move to split the United States from Europe must envision the seizure of at least part of this Western European heartland. Thus, in a very real sense, the world balance of power depends on our ability to react rapidly with adequate forces to assist our NATO allies in denying the resources and manpower in this critical region.¹

Communist expansion - or the threat of expansion - in Europe was halted by implementing the policy of containment. The keystone of this policy has been the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Since the inception of NATO in 1949, the United States has been an active partner in the collective defense of Europe and our military

¹Henry A. Kissinger, Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy, p. 201.

commitment has been the most explicit obligation undertaken by us.

This commitment is defined in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty as follows:

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all; and consequently they agree that, if such an attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self defense recognized by Article 51 of the charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.²

THE THREAT

To determine the size and type of the force required to deter or defeat an attack in Europe, the first essential step is an estimate of the capabilities and intentions of the potential enemy.

The Soviet Union seems to be ready for regional wars and maintains very large and well-equipped land armies capable of fighting both conventional and nuclear land wars. Since it neither possesses nor apparently plans a large surface navy, and since its airlift capability is modest, these forces could be earmarked for use

²Elizabeth C. Roy, US Military Commitments, p. 5.

against NATO forces in Europe.^{3,4} The precise size of their land force will necessarily remain guesswork. However, it is known that they maintain twenty armored and mechanized divisions with more than 6000 tanks in East Germany, two divisions in Poland and four divisions in Hungary for a total of twenty six divisions immediately available for use against NATO.^{5,6} Additionally, there are probably fifty to eighty divisions (many below strength) disposed in Western Russia. The Soviet Union could probably mobilize up to three hundred divisions but logistics factors-especially road capacity and supply requirements-would limit the number that could be effectively employed in Western Europe to between sixty and eighty.⁷ It should also be noted that there are approximately twenty six other Warsaw Pact divisions available to reinforce the Soviet Army. However, it is unlikely that these units would be used in the first echelon, but rather they would be used as follow up or reserve forces.

The Soviet Union has always been willing to use limited force to gain limited objectives.⁸ With its highly mobile forces and the availability of one of the best road nets in Western Europe, it

³Herbert S. Dinerstein, "Future Soviet Foreign Policy," in National Security, p. 32.

⁴Morris Bornstein, "The Role of Economic Growth," in National Security, p. 130.

⁵Hans Speidel, Assembly of Western European Union, Proceedings, pp. 151-152.

⁶B. H. Liddell Hart, "The Defense of Western Germany and the Baltic," Marine Corps Gazette, Vol. 48, Feb. 1964, pp. 18-22.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Raymond L. Garthoff, "War and Peace in Soviet Policy," Russian Review, Vol. XX, Apr. 1961, pp. 121-123.

would appear that speed would be a cardinal part of the Soviet strategy and that it would be very unlikely for them to conduct a major attack against the entire European front with land forces. If a quick exploitation were used, the easiest objective of all to reach would be the seaports of Hamburg and Bremen. Hamburg is only twenty five miles from the East German border, Bremen only seventy five. Another objective could be the important industrial area of the Ruhr.⁹ This lies barely a hundred miles from the Soviet positions in the vicinity of Kassel. In any attack the reason for initiation would not be to destroy, but to seize control and to present NATO with a "fait accompli" together with a peace offering.¹⁰

STRATEGY FOR NATO

The initial and current strategic military concept for NATO is to deter aggression; if this is unsuccessful, military forces are to be used against armed attack.¹¹ With the continuous presence of the Soviet armed threat in East Germany, NATO inferred that the spread of communism would be by military aggression and not by peaceful means. To meet this threat and to conform with the principle of the treaty, NATO military strategy has been concerned with defending and maintaining the integrity of the territory of the NATO members.

⁹Liddell Hart, op. cit., pp. 18-22.

¹⁰Robert E. Osgood, Limited War, p. 262.

¹¹Lord Ismay, "The First Five Years of NATO," in American Military Policy, pp. 287-297.

Initially and until the mid 1950's, the strategy in Central Europe was for the land forces to defend along the Rhine River even though there would be inadequate depth for the defense.¹² Although it was recognized that this strategy was unsatisfactory, it was not possible to defend further to the east in Central Europe because of the limited strength available to NATO without Western Germany.¹³ Subsequent to the admission of Western Germany into NATO and her contribution of 12 divisions, the defense was moved eastward to the East German-Czechoslovakian borders and the "forward strategy" was instituted. This strategy, when reduced to its simplest form, is best described in the words of General Hans Speidel: "We must meet the aggressor at the Iron Curtain, stop it, seize the initiative, and defeat it."¹⁴ In 1957, after the forward strategy was instituted, the MC 70 plan set a goal of thirty divisions as the minimum that could offer the required resistance and sustain a mobile defense of the entire 500 mile front.¹⁵

To implement this strategy, nine members of NATO contributed land forces to the Central Europe region. Currently, these countries have provided twenty four divisions to deter or defeat any Soviet threat in the central front.¹⁶ The NATO land forces are distributed

¹²Speidel, op. cit., pp. 151-152.

¹³Alfred M. Gruenther, "Developing Strength for European Defense," in American Military Policy, pp. 298-306.

¹⁴Speidel, op. cit., pp. 151-152.

¹⁵Neville Brown, "Deterrence and Defense in Central Europe," Journal of the Royal United Service Institution, Vol. 109, Nov. 1964, pp. 315-319.

¹⁶Ibid.

equally between the northern and southern sectors. In the northern sector, which is the area that is most vulnerable to attack, are the objectives of greatest value. The British, German, Belgian, Dutch and Canadian forces defend this sector. In the southern sector are forces of the Germans, French, and the US which has the only units that are maintained at full readiness for action.¹⁷ In addition to the committed forces, active and reserve forces are available in Western Europe and the United States, but few are at full combat strength in personnel and equipment.¹⁸ The US, alone, has six divisions with supporting troops that can be moved into action in a few weeks. To improve their reaction time and to provide visible evidence of intent to deploy additional forces, the US has large quantities of equipment prepositioned in Europe.

The dominant factor of this strategy for the defense of Central Europe is that it is one of reaction to a Soviet threat. As a result, the initiative as to the time and place of attack rests with the Soviet Union. To insure that we have the capability to react promptly to this threat or to a potential threat, US land forces are stationed in Europe. These forces consist of five divisions which are predominately armored to counter the Soviet tank threat. Prepositioned equipment, primarily for armor units, is also maintained in Europe to facilitate the rapid deployment and employment of additional land forces from the strategic reserve, if required.

¹⁷Liddell Hart, op. cit., pp. 18-22.

¹⁸Ibid.

The most critical factor affecting the successful implementation of the NATO strategy is time. The US land forces which are the most combat ready of those in Central Europe, are, for political reasons, located in the sector which contains the objectives of least value to the Soviets. In addition, this sector is the least vulnerable to attack because of the rugged terrain along the border and the depth of the area. The main strength of the NATO defense, therefore, is located in an area with the least probability of a Soviet thrust. Although the tactical mobility of the US armored forces is significant, it is highly unlikely that sufficient time would be available to apply this strength to prevent or to defeat a Soviet thrust in the most critical area to the north.

Time would also be a critical factor affecting the effective utilization of our strategic reserves. Although, the availability of prepositioned equipment will greatly reduce the time to react, time will be required to marry the new units up with their equipment. This was evidenced in the strategic mobility exercise, Big Lift, in 1963. Additionally, time would be required for the movement of these forces to a threatened area in the North from the preposition sites which are currently located in the southern sector. Under less than ideal conditions, when the strategic reserve forces have not closed in Europe prior to a Soviet attack, additional delays could be incurred. For it is highly probable that the airfields in the vicinity of the preposition equipment and the equipment itself would be either partially destroyed or not usable because of enemy air activity.

Another critical factor is the availability and the combat readiness of the committed forces. As indicated previously, the minimum force required to implement the forward defense is 30 divisions. However, there are only 24 divisions currently committed. In addition to this shortfall of six divisions, none of the committed divisions, with the exception of the five US divisions are in the required state of readiness to successfully defend against a Soviet attack.¹⁹

CONCLUSIONS

The NATO military strategy has been successful in deterring a Soviet threat. The degree of success in defending against a Soviet attack will depend on:

1. The time available to react to a Soviet thrust and to provide additional strength to the northern sector which contains the objectives of greatest value to the Soviets and the area that is most vulnerable to attack.
2. The willingness and capability of our allies to improve the combat readiness of their land forces and to commit additional divisions for the defense of Central Europe.
3. US willingness and ability to concentrate rapidly its military land power to assist our allies to defeat or expel the aggressor before he can seize a key limited objective and present NATO with a "fait accompli."

¹⁹Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

MIDDLE EAST

US POLICY AND STRATEGY

The Middle East is an area in size nearly equal to that of Europe and lies between and includes, Libya on the west, Pakistan on the east, Iran to the north and the Arabian Peninsula to the south. It has long been recognized as an area vital to the United States position because of the unique strategic position it occupies. It serves as a link and a barrier between three continents, it sits astride the worlds most vital traffic routes - land, sea, and air - and it provides an ideal base of operations for any counterattacks by air or land against Soviet aggression in any area.¹ In addition, with nearly two-thirds of the worlds known oil deposits, this area provides nearly seventy five percent of Western Europes demands for petroleum.

Since 1956, when the Eisenhower Doctrine was announced, the United States has had a moral commitment to provide military forces to countries in the Middle East to oppose overt aggression by a Communist or Communist dominated country.² Later in 1959, this commitment was formalized when the United States signed identical bilateral

¹Dankwart A. Rustow, "Defense of the Near East," in American Military Policy, pp. 330-340.

²Halford L. Hoskins, "The US in the Middle East: Policy in Transition," Current History, Vol. 48, May 1965, pp. 257-262.

agreements of cooperation with Iran, Pakistan and Turkey. The following quotation is from the agreement with Iran.³

. . . In case of aggression against Iran, the Government of the United States of America, in accordance with the Constitution of the United States of America, will take such appropriate action, including the use of armed forces, as may be mutually agreed upon and as is envisaged in the Joint Resolution to Promote Peace and Stability in the Middle East, in order to assist the Government of Iran at its request.

THE THREAT

From the time of the Czars, the Middle East has been an object of Russian ambition and it continues to be so under the Soviet regime.⁴ Although the Soviet Union has not engaged in direct military operations in these countries, it does not mean that it will forego this policy should less forceful means prove unsuccessful.⁵ The possibility of armed hostilities, however, are remote, for the Soviets will probably pursue their objectives by political rather than military means. In either case, they could gain in several ways by controlling this area. Some of these are:

1. The acquisition of warm water ports, which has been a long standing objective of the Russians.
2. Control of the Middle East oil which would permit them to deny this source to Western Europe and to use it for their own fleets operating in the Indian Ocean.⁶

³Elizabeth C. Roy, US Military Commitments, pp. 20-21.

⁴John D. Jernegan, "Middle East Defense," in American Military Policy, pp. 323-330.

⁵Edgar S. Furniss, Jr., ed., American Military Policy, p. 313.

⁶Rustow, op. cit., p. 332.

3. Control of the communications link between the Western World and the Far East.

The most serious threat today, however, is the lack of stability within the area. The basic political instability within the area is further intensified by inter Arab rivalries, Arab - Israel disputes, the acute antagonism between Pakistan and India, Soviet manipulations, and the Sino-Soviet dispute. Despite the many political weaknesses, the area so far has proved relatively safe from the Soviet threat.⁷ US military intervention in the future, however, could result from any number of plausible developments in this part of the world.

STRATEGY FOR MIDDLE EAST

The most fundamental consideration of every government in this area is the development of an adequate force, military and police, to provide internal defense. With internal political pressures and constant threats from neighboring countries, possession of this military power is essential. A majority of these countries, however, lack both the financial and military professional capability to equip and train an effective military force that is required to achieve this security.

Since the announcement of the Truman Doctrine in 1947, then as now stability in the Middle East countries has been a fundamental goal of the United States. In addition, many attempts have been made to establish an effective Middle East defense organization to

⁷Ibid., p. 336.

provide for the collective defense against a Communist threat. However, this proposal for a collective defense has never been completely accepted and it is still little more than a concept.

In the event of a major Soviet attack in this area, the combined indigenous land force capability, exclusive of Israel, would be approximately 700,000 personnel. Although this total number may be impressive, there are only two to four divisions which can be considered combat ready by modern standards of training, organization, and equipment. Israel, alone, could provide a sizeable, well trained and equipped army with adequate support facilities to participate in a regional war. However, in view of the tension and violence along her borders, there seems to be little chance that her forces could be integrated into a regional defense of the area. "One looks in vain for military strength in the Middle East to carry on a major campaign in partnership with the West. One will look for it in vain for many years."⁸

Consequently, basic US strategy in the Middle East is to provide assistance to the local military forces so that they may attain the capability to insure their internal defense and to a lesser degree the initial defense against a Soviet attack. Additionally, in the event of Soviet aggression, US land forces from the centrally located strategic reserves will be deployed to augment the indigenous forces.

⁸John C. Campbell, Defense of the Middle East: Problems of American Policy, p. 191.

In implementing this strategy one of the primary objectives, stability of the region, may be lost from view. Providing military assistance to local military forces for the purpose of developing the capability to insure internal defense may be valid when countries in the area are considered individually. However, it may be invalid when considering the region as an entity. It is possible that a country which attains the capability to insure its internal defense may also have sufficient military power to threaten or attack one of its neighbors, e.g., the Pakistan-India dispute and the Israel-Arab disputes.

Conversely, if military assistance is not provided to the individual countries, particularly those contiguous to the Soviet border, then the capability to provide an initial defense against a Soviet attack will probably not exist. This indigenous defense capability, coupled with the natural defense barrier along the border that is second only to the Alps and Himalayas, may prevent the conflict from deteriorating to the point where significantly large numbers of US land forces would be required to regain lost territory. For example, Iran, which is the strategic key to the area, faces subversion by an unfriendly United Arab Republic, insurrection by minority groups such as the Kurds, and indirect if not open aggression by the Soviets. In the event of aggression, the remoteness of Iran from the US would make deployments and support of combat land forces a major and time consuming problem. Upon arrival in the country, because of the rugged terrain, deployments would be restricted to main routes. Movement of forces away from

main routes would be by foot or air. Supplies also would be delivered by air or air dropped. In this environment, initial defense by the indigenous forces becomes a necessity, or significantly large portions of the country would be overrun before adequate US land power could be made available.

Today, limited land forces (a reinforced infantry battalion) of the strategic reserve located in the United States could deploy to the Middle East in six hours plus flying time.⁹ Additional forces could follow immediately, as required. In the near future, with the scheduled procurement of larger and faster aircraft, the reaction time will be greatly reduced and our capability to transport men and equipment will be greatly increased. Another means available for expediting the deployment of the strategic reserve force from the United States is the prepositioned equipment and supplies currently aboard the floating depot at Subic Bay, Philippines. The use of this equipment could greatly facilitate deployments by reducing the initial requirement to transport equipment by air and by diverting this airlift to transporting personnel. Thus, more personnel can be projected into the area in a shorter time period.

However, there are several factors that must be considered if this prepositioned equipment is to be used. With the floating depot concept, adequate terminals near the intended area of employment

⁹Paul D. Adams, "Can Strike Command Really Strike?" Air Man, Jan. 1965, p. 23.

must be available in order to off load the equipment. Additionally, for maximum benefit, sufficient warning must be provided to permit the ships to close in the area at approximately the same time that the land force unit is scheduled to arrive by air. Vulnerability of the ships in transit to the area and during off loading also must be considered if equipment is to be used in the Middle East area.

CONCLUSIONS

There is no effective regional defense for the area. The degree of success of US strategy for employment of land forces in this area will depend on:

1. The time available to react to a Soviet attack and the capability of the indigenous forces to effectively conduct an initial defense on the Soviet border.
2. The availability of air and sea terminals close to the objective area for use of strategic reserve force.
3. The availability of prepositioned equipment aboard floating depots.

CHAPTER 5

NORTHEAST ASIA (KOREA)

US POLICY AND STRATEGY

Korea is the geographical focal point in the Far East where conflicting national interests of major powers have converged for centuries. If a strong military power could control the peninsula, it would be in a position to dominate the contiguous areas. The strategic importance of this peninsula that projects southeastward from the continent of Asia, therefore, can be attributed to its geographical location.

Korea is bordered on the north by the USSR and Manchuria; it is separated from China on the west by the narrow neck of the Yellow Sea, and from Japan on the East by the Sea of Japan. It has served as a bridge between Japan and the Asian mainland for centuries. Korea has been considered by China and Russia as the back door to Manchuria and has been regarded by Japan ". . . as a dagger pointed at its heart. . . ." ¹

At the Cairo Conference in 1943, the United States officially indorsed the principle that Korea should be a free and independent country.² In 1945, to divide the Soviet and US military forces and to facilitate receiving the surrender of Japanese military forces,

¹Kyung Cho Chung, Korea Tomorrow, Land of the Morning Calm, p. 5.

²US Dept of State, Office of Public Affairs, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, p. ix.

the United States agreed to the division of Korea at the 38th parallel. Although it was never intended that the 38th parallel would become a political division, it was interpreted as such by the Soviets in 1945 and again by Communist China at the end of the Korean War in 1953. Subsequent to the Korean War and after pledging US forces to resist any renewal of armed attack, the United States negotiated with the Republic of Korea a mutual defense pact. This was to be the final link of the chain for encircling and containing Communist expansion by mutual alliances with those Free World countries which were willing to contribute to the extent of their capabilities. This arrangement not only commits the US to the defense of Korea, but also allows for the stationing of US military forces in Korea. The specific portions of the treaty that pertain to the US commitment and stationing of forces in Korea are:³

ARTICLE III. Each party recognizes that an armed attack in the Pacific area on either of the Parties in territories now under their respective administrative control, or hereafter recognized by one of the Parties as lawfully brought under the administrative control of the other, would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes.

ARTICLE IV. The Republic of Korea grants, and the United States accepts, the right to dispose United States land, air and sea forces in and about the territory of the Republic of Korea as determined by mutual agreement.

³US Dept of State, American Foreign Policy, 1950-1955, Vol. 1, pp. 879-898.

THE THREAT

The major threat of a conflict in Korea results from the partition of the country into a Communist north and anti-Communist south. The governments of each desire unification of the country under its control and neither is prepared to settle for the status quo.

North Korea was established as a Communist satellite by the Soviet Union at the end of World War II and it still remains a dependency of the Communist bloc. With extensive assistance, North Korea has made substantial progress since the Armistice Agreement in 1953. It has increased the strength and effectiveness of the armed forces overall; however, the land forces are not on a par with those of South Korea. The armed forces, however, are capable of maintaining internal security and could probably conduct limited offensive operations if they receive logistic support from external sources.

With her entry into the Korean War in 1950, Communist China began playing an increasingly aggressive and dominant role in all Asian affairs - particularly in Korea. As a result of her military intervention in the Korean War, her participation in the armistice negotiation, and her assumption of the leading role for the Communists in subsequent international deliberations on Korea, China brought about a shift in the power structure and became the principal threat to security in that part of Asia. This was evident, as early as 1955 when western intelligence sources had

generally concluded that ". . . the Soviets have accorded Chinese supremacy in Asia."⁴

Even though the Chinese have long been the more militant of the two major Communist rivals, the probability of armed hostilities are remote; they will probably pursue their objective of unifying Korea under Communist China's domination by political means rather than military. However, if they should resort to military means, the Chinese have the capability of confronting the United States and its allies with the largest conventional army in the world. It is estimated to have a strength of approximately two million men organized into roughly 200 divisions. They are well trained and led; however, their capability is somewhat reduced because of the shortage and quality of equipment available.

STRATEGY FOR NORTHEAST ASIA

The fundamental objective of South Korea has been to develop an adequate force capable of deterring aggression and, if hostilities occur, of defending her territory along the approximately 150 mile boundary with North Korea. However, they lacked both the financial and professional capability to develop these forces. Also they have a limited capability for maintaining forces in being because of the lack of industrial output, financial resources, and technological capability.

⁴Wilfred Ryder, "China, Russia Agree on Spheres of Influence," Eastern World, Vol. 9, Feb. 1955, p. 17.

Since 1953, the United States has helped to equip and train the South Korean forces. The land forces consisting of nineteen divisions are now considered capable of defending against incursions and probably of defending against an attack by the North Korean army alone - provided the US furnishes logistical support.

The US strategy, therefore, has been oriented toward providing Korea with military assistance to develop and train a land force capable of defending against any Communist attack, other than a major attack with active support of Chinese forces. For the latter contingency, US land forces currently committed in Korea and land forces of the strategic reserve or theater reserve would be utilized to provide, with the indigenous force, the capability to defend the territory of South Korea.

Successful implementation of this strategy, therefore, would require the US to react promptly to at least two possible situations; (1) an attack for a limited objective by northern Korean forces alone and (2) an attack by North Koreans with active support by the Chinese Communist.

The current strength of the South Korean land forces and the presences of US land forces would make the first an unlikely possibility. However, if the North Koreans did initiate an attack to seize a limited objective, US military power probably would have to be projected rapidly into the area in order to reduce the risk of the hostilities expanding. Initial success by the North Koreans might encourage active participation by Chinese 'volunteers'

for the purpose of expanding the limited success or insuring the retention of any gains and thus increasing their negotiating position.

In the latter case, an attack by North Koreans with Chinese augmentation, the purpose probably would be to overrun the South as rapidly as possible and to defeat the opposing forces before adequate forces from outside could arrive. To accomplish this, the Chinese would have to deploy considerable forces from Manchuria in order to build up the required land force capability. That they could accomplish this covertly or in such a way that minimum warning would be available to the US is very probable considering the capability they demonstrated in 1950.

In 1953, the United Nations had approximately twenty nine divisions or their equivalents available to contain the North Koreans and Chinese along the current boundary. Since that time, however, the effectiveness of the South Korean forces and their defensive positions have been improved considerably. Therefore, the South Korean and US force of twenty one divisions should be able to contain the initial assault and to conduct a defense along the current line for a short period of time. To conduct a sustained defense without significant loss of territory, however, would require not only augmentation from the strategic reserve, but the deployment of these forces upon receipt of the first indication that Chinese forces were moving into North Korea. Any delay in deployment of the strategic reserve would require considerably larger forces to hold the Chinese at the 38th parallel or to restore this line if penetrated.

CONCLUSION

The degree of success of US strategy for employment of land forces in this area will depend on the timely warning of Chinese land force deployments to North Korea and the US capability to deploy US strategic reserve forces rapidly to South Korea.

CHAPTER 6

TENETS OF MILITARY STRATEGY

There is no substitute for success as the justification for a given strategy. In terms of attaining its objectives, it seems reasonable that current military strategy is successful. From the analysis of the strategy for employing land forces in nonnuclear regional wars, certain conclusions emerged that could influence the strategy for the 1970-1980 time frame. These conclusions are cited as tenets.

1. Land forces in the central reserve should be increased and deployed forces in Europe and Northeast Asia should be reduced to one division force in each area.

The system of alliances and agreements to which this nation is bound involves worldwide commitments for our land forces. Today we have committed 44% of the available land forces to Europe and Korea for the purpose of deterring Communist aggression. In addition, approximately 20% of the land forces are committed to defeating Communist aggression in Southeast Asia. Only 36% of our land forces would be available to meet commitments in Latin America, in the Middle East, or to augment the forces currently deployed. Obviously, a more flexible and improved capability is required if the United States is to meet its commitments.

Increasing the land forces in the central reserve by reducing the land forces deployed to Europe and Korea would provide the flexibility required to concentrate land power when and in the

amount required. Adequate forces also would be available to meet two or more commitments simultaneously. Concurrently there would be little or no degradation in the capability to implement the strategy for employing land forces in Europe or Korea.

In this time frame, the personnel of four divisions from the central reserve could be moved to Europe in 30-36 hours or to Korea in 42-48 hours by using 48 C5A aircraft. An infantry brigade could be moved to Europe in 3-4 hours and to Korea in 5-7 hours by using 15 of the supersonic transports.

2. Forces of the central reserve must be deployed to potential trouble areas at the first positive indication that a threat is developing.

When it becomes apparent that US interests are threatened, the timely application of adequate force will lend credibility to our announced policy and will decrease tension. Delayed action normally requires that larger forces be applied for a longer period of time.

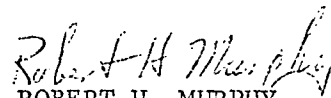
The Berlin crisis in 1960 is an example of the former. Rapid deployment of land forces to Germany lent credibility to our announced policy and permitted a decrease in tension with this show of force. Vietnam is an example of a failure to deploy forces when the threat was developing.

3. Equipment and supplies should be prepositioned in floating depots to reduce the probability of mal-positioning, to reduce vulnerability and to improve response time.

With the exception of Europe, the possible areas of confrontation with the Communist aggressor are so numerous and dispersed that it is practically impossible to determine an optimum location for land based preposition sites. Sites selected to serve more than one area, (e.g.), Okinawa, have the disadvantage of requiring additional time to move the equipment to its destination because of the time required to position and load the aircraft or ships that will transport it. There is also the risk that land based equipment will be lost to sabotage or that base rights or access rights may be lost by a change in government.

4. Countries in the Middle East which are contiguous to Communist countries should develop and maintain land forces capable of conducting a limited or initial defense of their border.

The United States has a commitment to assist these countries to defend themselves against Communist aggression. The amount of US land forces that may be required is directly related to the size and effectiveness of the indigenous land forces. Since manpower is normally the most available resource in these countries, the United States should encourage them to develop their land force capability by providing equipment, training and support.


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